

ALL ORIGINAL GIANT HORROR ANNUAL!

PSYCHO  
1972  
ANNUAL

# PSYCHO

## ANNUAL

47808  
1872  
75¢



AMERICAN BOOK COMPANY

THE  
TRUTH  
BEHIND THE  
MYTH OF  
**DRACULA!**

ALSO:

**BURN  
BABY, BURN!**

THE **HEAP'S**  
CHALLENGE  
OF TERROR!

AND MORE... MUCH MORE!



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A SATEWALL PUBLICATION

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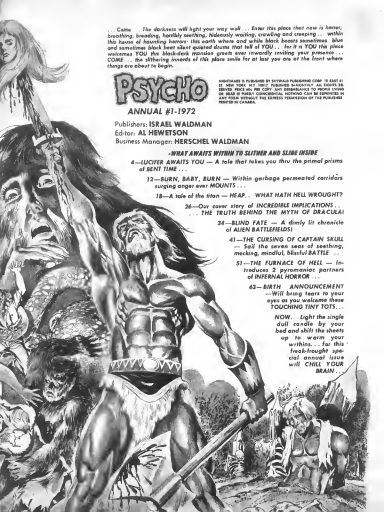
PSYCHO'S SUPERNATURAL SERIES:

# THE HORNED GOAT OF SATAN

**THE BAPHOMET IDOL** IS SAID TO REPRESENT THE MAGICAL FORM OF **ABSOLUTE**. IT HAS THE HEAD AND HOVES OF A **GOAT**, WITH A THICK BLACK CANDLE SET BETWEEN THE TWO ENORMOUS LONG HORNS; AND **HUMAN HANDS**, AND A SCALE-LIKE **BELLY**! IT WEARS A LONG ROBE ATTACHED AT ITS WAIST, AND HAS UPON ITS GROTESQUE BACK AN EVIL PAIR OF FEATHERED **WINGS**!

THE **HORNED GOAT OF SATAN** IS SAID TO REPRESENT **LUCIFER** HIMSELF ON VISITS TO EARTH, AND AT UNHOLY MEETINGS OF THE DREADED CULT OF **SATANISTS** IS ALWAYS PRESENT A MEMBER OF THE CULT WEARING A MASK AND GARBED AND DISGUISED AS THE MONSTROUS BEAST! THE BIZARRE PENTAGRAM AFFIXED ON ITS **FOREHEAD** IS TO REPRESENT THE BRIDGED GAP BETWEEN THIS WORLD AND THE WORLD OF HIS MASTER...**HELL!**





... Come ... The darkness will light your way walk ... Enter this place that new is horror, breathing, breathing, heavily seething, hideously waiting, crawling and creeping ... within this house of haunting horror: the earth where and while black beasts sometimes blue and sometimes black best quieted drums that tell of YOU ... for it is YOU this place welcomes YOU the black-dusk rhapsody greets over inwardly inviting your presence ... COME ... the slithering innards of this place smile for at last you are at the front where things are about to begin.

# PSYCHO

ANNUAL #1-1972

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## -WHAT AWAITS WITHIN TO SLITHER AND SLIDE INSIDE

4—LUCIFER AWAITS YOU — A tale that takes you thru the primal prism of BENT TIME ...

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53—THE FURNACE OF HELL — Introduces 2 pyromaniac partners of INFERNAL HORROR ...

63—BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT — Will bring tears to your eyes as you welcome these TOUCHING TINY TOTS ...

NOW... Light the single dull candle by your bed and shift the sheets up to warm your withins... for this freak-fraught special annual issue will CHILL YOUR BRAIN...

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CALIFORNIA IN AUGUST, MID-MORNING AND HOT OUT IN THE SANTA BARBARA SUNLIGHT, WHERE TWO YOUNG MEN WAIT, HOPING THAT SOMEONE WILL GIVE THEM A LIFT...

GET UP, CARY!  
THIS LOOKS LIKE  
OUR RIDE OUTTA  
HERE.

SAN  
DIEGO

TIME CAN BE BENT, LET'S LOOK THROUGH *THE PRISM* THAT SEPARATES THE FUTURE FROM THE PRESENT, TO GLIMPSE *THE UNKNOWN* THAT HINTS OF *NIGHTMARE* AHEAD FOR THOSE HITCHHIKERS, MAKING THEIR WAY BY THUMB FROM PORTLAND TO SAN DIEGO, A CHIMERIC IMAGE THAT CAN ALMOST BE SEEN, SHIMMERING IN THE HEAT, BEFORE IT IS CARRIED AWAY BY THE SLIGHT BREEZE, TO MAKE WAY FOR THE PRESENT...

LUCIFER  
AWAITS  
YOU!



FANTASTIC!  
WITCH AND I HAVE BEEN  
WAITING ALL MORNING FOR  
A RIDE -- THERE'RE SO MANY  
OTHER HITCH-HIKERS THAT NO  
ONE WANTS TO STOP.

THIS IS  
MY DAUGHTER  
SARA...

WE'RE ONLY  
GOING ABOUT  
A HUNDRED  
MILES...



AND I'VE A SON WHO  
USED TO HITCH-HIKE, SO I  
ALWAYS TRY TO STOP FOR  
YOUNG PEOPLE, IF THEY  
DON'T LOOK DANGEROUS.

WHAT IF  
THEY ARE?



I'VE NEVER ENCOUNTERED  
THAT SITUATION -- I GUESS I  
HAVE A LOT OF FAITH IN  
OTHER PEOPLE...

WHAT ABOUT  
YOU SARA?

I'M NOT AS  
TRUSTING AS BROTHER  
...I DON'T THINK I'D  
HAVE STOPPED...

EXIT  
LOA  
WHEELS



LET'S GET OVER TO THE "ON" RAMP, MAYBE WE'LL GET ANOTHER RIDE BEFORE THE SUN FRIES US.

IF I'D BEEN A LITTLE QUICKER, WE WOULDN'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THAWING A LIFT NOW!

THE HEAT OF DAY IS COMING TO A CLIMAX, AND BOTH OF YOU FEEL THE STIR OF SMALL BREEZES THAT WILL CARRY AWAY THE STYLING HOTNESS. BUT CAN YOU SENSE THE PRESENCE OF DARK DESTINY, THAT HOVERS OVER YOU ON INVISIBLE ARMS, GRASLING THE SWORD OF ANAKKON BY A SLENDER THREAD?



TO PASS THE TIME, YOU READ GRAFFITI LEFT BEHIND BY OTHER BLISSIVE TRAVELERS OF THE ROAD... AND YOU TALK...

...AND, FINALLY, HEAR PUSK, YOU SUCCEED IN SHARING A RIDE!





MY NAME IS CHUCK MCKELLYN ---  
I'M A PHOTOGRAPHER FOR THE  
NEWS MAGAZINES, AND I TRAVEL  
AROUND PRETTY MUCH AS I  
PLEASE, PIONEERING THE EDITORS  
FOR MY ASSIGNMENTS.

IT WOULD BE  
NEXT TO IMPOSSIBLE  
FOR ANYONE TO  
TRACE ME.

AMAZING! AND YOU'VE  
NEVER --UH--RAN INTO  
ANY TROUBLE ALONE?



NOT YET, ANYWAY!  
I GUESS I'VE BEEN  
LUCKY....!



SLOW DOWN THE  
CAR!! AND  
MOVE  
OVER!!



I'M GOODMAN!--  
AND YOU'RE  
NOTHIN'!

A-GURKK!

THE ROGUE MOON RIDES AS WILL-  
JUST STEALS OVER YOU, NITZ!  
AND IN THEIR HIDDEN RETREAT  
THE MIDNIGHT DANCERS WEAVE  
THEIR WEB OF HORROR....

WHAT'RE YOU  
DOING... URK!...  
WHO DO YOU THINK  
YOU ARE?!

THE MOON OF SKULLS ILLUMES YOU  
IN COLD LIGHT AS, BY FURIES  
POSSESSED, YOU SHRED CHUCK  
MCKELLYN'S FLESH.

THIS SCENE IS FOR YOUR EYES  
ONLY. AS A NEBULOUS HINT OF  
DESTINY FLITS BRIEFLY ACROSS  
THE STOIC MOON....!







THE WARNING COMES TOO LATE, AND AS THE CAR SHEDS OUT OF CONTROL, THE MOON EMERGES FROM BEHIND RAIN CLOUDS, WARNING, TO WITNESS DESTINY'S WORKINGS...

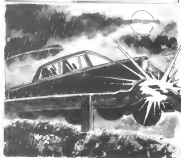
AS IF IN GRIM RETRIBUTION THE RAIN BEGINS TO FALL AND WAS THAT A BREATH OF THE WINDS OF DARKNESS THAT YOU FELT, MITCH, AS YOU OPENED THE DOOR TO DISPOSE OF THE CORPSE?



THE BLOOD ON YOUR ARMS AND THE CAR SEAT IS WARM, STICKY, AND YOU SUDDENLY GROW CHILLED IN ITS EMBRACE! THE SWEET, CLOAKING SCENT DISTURBS YOU... AND THE CAR IS MOVING TOO FAST ON THE SLICK WET FREEWAY!



THE SICKENING LURCH AS THE CAR PLUNGES INTO THE AIR... THE HARDNESS IN YOUR STOMACH... AND THE BREATH RATTLING IN YOUR THROAT TELL YOU THAT THERE WILL BE NO ARRIVAL IN SAN DIEGO FOR EITHER OF YOU... EXCEPT, PERHAPS, IN THE MORGUE!



THE RAIN AND THE DARKNESS ARE SIMULTANEOUS, AND THE CRASH AND EXPLOSION OF IMPACT FADE IN YOUR EARS... IT'S DARKER THAN YOU THINK, AND YOU SEEM TO FLOAT ON THE EDGE OF TIME, AS YOUR LIFE-FORCE TREADS THE PATHLESS TRAIL OF THE SPIRIT...

19  
SO WHERE  
ARE WE? IS  
THIS...?

REALIZATION COMES ABRUPTLY  
AS YOU WAIT THERE IN THE  
GLOOM, BEYOND THE GATES  
OF DREAM, LETTING THE  
DUST OF DEATH SIFT  
THROUGH YOUR FINGERS...

THE DARK PIER THAT STIRRED YOUR BLOOD LUST NO  
LONGER AMPS MUSIC WITHIN YOUR HEAD, MITCH... YOUR  
BARS RING IN THE SILENCE... AND NO UNEARTHLY ANTHEM  
PLAYS!

LOOK!  
DOWN THERE...  
SEE IT?!

IT'S SO FAR  
AWAY... COULD  
IT BE A TUNNEL  
OPENING?

LISTEN -- IT SOUNDS LIKE  
A CAR! AND THERE ARE  
THE HEADLIGHTS!

MAYBE WE  
CAN HITCH  
A RIDE...

WHO ARE YOU...

...AND WHERE  
ARE YOU GOING?

I AM NOW  
RAMPSKATEZ!

WNOOP

THE MASTER  
OF THE DARK GATE...  
AND SERVANT OF SATAN,  
THE LORD OF BLOOD!!  
KNOWS YOU,  
AND HIS SHADOW  
PEOPLE...!

FOR THE FINAL  
TIME, WHAT ARE  
YOUR THOUGHTS,  
CARY?  
REMEMBER YOUR  
COMPLAINT  
ABOUT THE SUN?  
YOU'D GIVE  
ANYTHING TO  
BASK IN ITS  
LIGHT NOW  
WOULDN'T YOU...  
EVEN IN ITS HEAT,  
WHICH IS AS  
NOTHING  
COMPARED TO  
WHAT WAITS FOR  
YOU AND MITCH  
... FOREVER...  
IN **HELL!!**

**THE END**

THE FOUL STENCH OF ROTTING GARBAGE PERMEATED THE CORRIDORS...AN ICY DECEMBER WIND SCREAMED THROUGH THE HALLWAYS, ENTERING THE BUILDING THROUGH BROKEN WINDOW-PANES AND CHILLING ALL OF ITS INHABITANTS. ON THE 3RD FLOOR, A LIGHTBULB HAD BURNED OUT MORE THAN A MONTH AGO, LEAVING THE LANDING IN TOTAL DARKNESS. YET, FROM THE BLACK STAIRWELL, A HAPPY, SOFT VOICE SANG A CHILDHOOD RHYME.

PAT A CAKE,  
PAT A CAKE,  
BAKER'S MAN;  
BAKE ME A  
CAKE AS FAST  
AS YOU CAN.

PAT IT AND  
PRICK IT AND  
MARK IT WITH T  
AND PUT IT IN  
THE OVEN FOR--  
OOOOHHHHH!

CHOMP!

MAMA!  
MAMA! PLEASE  
HELP ME!

GOOD  
HEAVENS!  
WHAT IS IT,  
DEAR?  
WHAT'S  
WRONG?

# BURN, BABY, BURN

OH MY  
GOOD GOD!  
THAT RAT...  
IT GOT YOU  
SOMETHING  
AWFUL!

MAMA  
IT HURTS!  
IT HURTS  
SO BAD!



FOR SEVERAL DAYS AFTER THE YOUNG GIRL'S TRAGIC ATTACK, SHE WAS THE MAIN TOPIC OF CONVERSATION. BUT BEFORE LONG, THE TENANTS FORGOT THEIR NEIGHBOR'S ORdeal AND WERE AGAIN EMERGED IN THEIR OWN PROBLEMS.

LOOK, I'VE BEEN TRYING TO REACH MR. GRIFFIN FOR MORE THAN A WEEK. THE STOVE ISN'T WORKING PROPERLY... HUH? CERTAINLY I PAY MY RENT ON TIME!!

DOESN'T MR. GRIFFIN CARE ABOUT ANY OF HIS TENANTS? WHAT KIND OF A MAN IS HE, ANYWAY?

HE NEVER COMES TO THE PHONE ALL I DO IS TALK TO ONE OF HIS GIRLS WHEN I CALL HIS OFFICE.

IF I CAN FIND A BETTER JOB SOON, WE'LL BE ABLE TO MOVE OUT OF THIS OUMP, DARLING!

I'M HEADING OUT TO CHECK UP ON SEVERAL JOBS. THERE'S A COUPLE OF PROMISING ONES IN THIS MORNIN'S PAPER.

OH, NO, I'M OUT OF MILK FOR THE BABY. I'D BETTER RUN DOWN FOR TEN MINUTES!

JIM WOULD BE FURIOUS IF HE KNEW I'D LEFT THE BABY ALONE... BUT I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!

CALL ME IF SOMETHING COMES THROUGH, HONEY. I'LL BE IN ALL DAY... IT'S TOO COLD TO GO OUT WITH THE BABY.

I WAS GONE OVER A HALF HOUR... THAT CHECK-OUT LINE NEVER MOVED... UH-OH, WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW?

IT'S... IT'S LITTLE JIMMY! OH MY GOD!

THE PAIN OF  
SEEING HER  
DEAD CHILD WAS  
TOO MUCH FOR  
MRS. CARTER.



GIVE ME  
BACK MY BABY!  
YOU CAN'T  
TAKE HIM AWAY  
FROM ME! GIVE  
HIM BACK!

SOB!  
SOB!

MA'AM,  
YOUR SON IS  
DEAD! THERE'S  
NOTHING YOU CAN  
DO FOR HIM NOW!  
I'M VERY  
SORRY!

WHAT  
HAPPENED  
TO THE  
KID?

A FIREMAN SAID THEY  
HAD A GAS LEAK!  
WITH HIS TINY LUNGS,  
IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG  
BEFORE THE FUMES  
DID HIM IN!

YEAH!

YOU'RE  
RIGHT,  
MAN!

OH DEAR! MRS. CARTER  
TOLD ME SHE WAS HAVING  
TROUBLE WITH HER STOVE  
LAST WEEK... ONLY SHE COULDN'T  
GET MR. GRIFFIN TO SEND  
ANYONE OVER TO TAKE  
CARE OF IT!

YOU HEAR  
THAT? THAT KID  
DIED BECAUSE OF  
GRIFFIN! IN MY  
BOOK THAT MAKES  
HIM A  
MURDERER!

HOW MUCH MORE  
ARE WE GONNA TAKE  
FROM THAT CREEP?  
NOTHING IS RIGHT ABOUT  
THIS PLACE! THAT INCINERATOR  
HASN'T WORKED FOR A YEAR!  
I'M TIRED OF LIVING WITH  
THE STINK OF GARBAGE!

MEET MR. GEORGE GRIFFIN...  
PROFESSIONAL SLUM LORD! IT WAS THE  
FIRST OF THE MONTH AND HE WAS PAYING  
HIS REGULAR VISIT TO THE BUILDING TO  
PICK UP HIS RENT CHECKS.

OH CERTAINLY,  
MR. GRIFFIN! WHY  
DON'T YOU COME  
IN AND I'LL  
GET IT.

JEEZ, I  
SHOULD HAVE  
PUT-- BELCH!--  
SOME MORE  
MUSTARD ON  
THIS!

LET'S SEE,  
WASLEWSKI... HAVE YOU  
GOT YOUR \$72.50 FOR  
THIS MONTH? I'M TIRED  
OF WAITING TILL THE 3RD  
OR 4TH OF THE MONTH  
TILL YOU COME ACROSS.



AND TRUE TO THEIR WORD, THE TENANTS BEGAN THE MANY REPAIRS, FROM THE HALLWAYS...

TO THE FURNACE!

WHAT A PLEASURE IT'LL BE NOT TO SMELL THE ROTTING GARBAGE!

TO THE ROOFTOP...

AT LEAST THE RAIN WON'T LEAK IN ON THE TOP FLOOR APARTMENTS ANYMORE!

CLEARING OUT THAT INCINERATOR CHUTE WAS SOME PROJECT. WALLY AND I SPENT THREE DAYS DOING IT.

THEY'RE NUTS... ALL OF THEM. THINKING THEY CAN KEEP ME LOCKED UP IN HERE.

AND ALL THE WHILE, MR. GRIFFIN EATS AND STEWS...

HARDLY GIVING ME ENOUGH FOOD TO KEEP ME ALIVE. JUST WAIT TILL I GET OUT I'LL HAVE 'EM ALL THROWN OUT ONTO THE STREET!

SOUNDS LIKE THE EAGER BEAVERS ARE WORKING ON THE FURNACE, WELL, AT LEAST I'LL GET SOME REPAIRS OUT OF ALL THIS. AND THEY CERTAINLY CAN'T SEND ME A BILL! HA, HA, HA!

WHO'S THERE? JESUS CHRIST, IT'S SO BRIGHT I CAN'T SEE A DAMNED THING!

MR. GRIFFIN, WE'VE FINISHED OUR WORK. WE'D LIKE YOU TO INSPECT THE PLACE AND MAKE SURE YOU'RE SATISFIED.

NONE OF YOU ARE GOING TO GET AWAY WITH THIS, YOU KNOW. I'LL SEE THAT YOU ALL... HEY, THAT'S A PRETTY FAIR PAINT JOB!

AND NICE WORK ON THIS, TOO!!

WE'RE GLAD YOU LIKE IT, MR. GRIFFIN! BUT WAIT'LL YOU SEE WHAT ELSE WE'VE DONE!

THE TOUR OF THE BUILDING  
LEADS MR. GRIFFIN TO THE  
TOP FLOOR...

IT'S GOING TO  
BE REAL TOUGH--  
PUFF!--TO HAVE  
YOU ALL THROWN  
OUT INTO THE  
STREETS. BUT I'LL  
REMEMBER HOW  
YOU ALL  
PITCHED IN!

BUT WAIT,  
MR. GRIFFIN,  
YOU'VE GOT TO  
SEE HOW WE  
CLEANED OUT THE  
INCINERATOR. MR.  
CARTER SPENT  
SEVERAL DAYS  
WORKING ON IT!

REMEMBER HOW THE  
TENANTS COMPLAINED  
THAT THE GARBAGE  
WOULD CLOG UP THE  
SHUTE? WELL, IT'S  
NOT GOING TO  
HAPPEN AGAIN.

UH--I'M  
SURE IT'S  
FINE. I GET  
THE IDEA. YOU  
FIXED IT REAL  
GOOD!

HIS TENANTS MAKE SURE THAT  
MR. GRIFFIN CHECKS OUT THEIR  
INCINERATOR REPAIRS FIRST-HAND.

WELL, MR.  
GRIFFIN, BE  
SURE TO LET US  
KNOW WHAT YOU  
THINK!



THEY NEVER DID  
FIND OUT WHAT  
THE SLUM-LORD  
THOUGHT OF IT!

THE END



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We make you fair warning, chronic collector, these farfetched freak-fantasies are selling FAST... To keep your collection complete send in the creeping cash NOW for these...

**FEAR-FRACTURED  
BACK-ISSUES!**

IT IS  
SOMEWHERE  
OFF THE COAST OF  
CAPE COD...  
THE HEAP HAS  
WALKED DAYS...  
WEEKS... TO  
HIM TIME  
IS OF NO  
CONSEQUENCE...

THIS  
BEAUTIFUL  
COUNTRY...  
ONCE UPON A  
TIME I WOULD  
HAVE  
ENJOYED  
IT...

...SWIMMING  
OR FISHING  
WITH MY  
WOMAN...  
LAURIE...

NOW I  
KNOW ONLY  
MISERY...

DEEP IN THOUGHT THE HEAP STUMBLES ON THE JAGGED  
ROCKS AND FALLS TO THE GROUND...HE IS NOT HURT...  
HOW CAN A HEAP GET HURT?...

UUUGGGGHHN

WHAT'S THIS  
UGLY MUCK  
COVERING THE  
ROCKS... SOME  
KIND OF SLIME...

BUT  
SLIME IS  
INAMMATE  
HEAP...WHILE  
THE THING  
THAT NOW  
GRABS YOU  
FROM BEHIND  
IS NOT...

UUUGHH  
MY THROAT,  
SOMETHING  
CHOKING  
ME!

HOLY  
GOD!

...CRAWLING  
OUT OF THE  
OCEAN...  
IT'S  
STRENGTH...

...IS  
OVERWHELMING!

YOU MAY THINK  
YOURSELF SAFE  
WITHIN YOUR BULK  
HEAP... BUT IN A  
MOMENT YOU'LL  
MEET YOUR MOST  
TERRIFYING FOE  
IN THE CHALLENGE OF  
TERROR  
CALLED...

THE  
HEAP

WHAT  
HATH HELL  
WROUGHT?

NOW AS THE UNNAMEABLE THING FROM DAVEY JONES' LOCKER SMASHES YOU TO THE GROUND YOU BEGIN TO REALIZE WHAT YOU'RE UP AGAINST... DON'T YOU, HEAP... SLOWLY IT SINKS INTO YOUR THICK SKULL....

UUUGGGGHHH

ALMOST LOSING CONSCIOUSNESS... BLACKING OUT...

...MUST FIGHT TO KEEP MY MIND GOING... IF I BLACK-OUT NOW I'M FINISHED!

UUUGGGGHHH!

...CAN'T FIGHT IT... TOO HUGE... CAN'T KEEP MY MIND GOING... CAN'T CONCENTRATE... CAN'T EVEN SEE ANYMORE!

CAN'T FIGHT IT... JUST CAN'T... TOO MUCH FOR ME...

...FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THIS MONSTROUS FORM AS THE HEAP...

I'M FORCED TO FLEE...

...RUN FOR MY VERY LIFE...

MUST FLEE... CAN'T FIGHT SOMETHING AS MONSTROUS AS THAT... AND WHAT'S THE POINT ANYWAY...

...WHO KNOWS WHAT KIND OF MIND IT MIGHT HAVE... IT MIGHT ONCE HAVE BEEN MAN LIKE ME...

...ALTHOUGH MORE LIKELY IT'S ONLY A WEIRD FREAK OF NATURE... AN ACCIDENT... A MUTANT SPAWNED OF SOME UNHOLY TWIST OF FATE...

COLLECT YOUR THOUGHTS, HEAR...  
YOU THAT WERE ONCE A MAN...  
COLLECT THEM AND ORGANIZE  
THEM INTO A COLLECTION OF  
REASONS FOR TURNING  
COWARD...

IT'S  
NOT MY  
PROBLEM...

...I ONLY STUMBLED  
ACROSS THE CREATURE  
BY ACCIDENT...IF  
ANYONE HAS THE  
RESPONSIBILITY OF  
DOING ANYTHING  
ABOUT IT IT'S  
THE LAW!

NOT ME...

THAT VILLAGE  
BELOW...IF THE THING  
GETS ANYWHERE NEAR  
IT THERE WILL BE  
ABSOLUTE CHAOS...

...BUT WHAT CAN I DO...  
NOTHING...I COULDN'T  
DEFEAT THE THING  
EVEN IF I WANTED TO...

...I HAD TO RUN  
FROM IT JUST TO  
SAVE MY OWN  
LIFE...

GOOD  
LORD!

DADDY...  
WHAT  
IS IT?...

NEVER  
MIND THE  
QUESTIONS  
JUST RUN,  
BOY...JUST  
RUN...

THEY RUN  
AT THE VERY  
SIGHT OF ME...  
JUST AS I RAN  
FROM THE  
SLITHERING  
SEA  
CREATURE...

IF IT GETS  
HOLD OF US ALL  
THE QUESTIONS  
IN THE WORLD  
WON'T HELP  
US...

I CAN HEAR  
THE THING  
COMING UP  
THE CLIFF...  
SLIDING UP...  
DRAGGING  
ITSELF UP...

...BUT  
IT'S NOT  
MY  
PROBLEM...

OKAY HEAP...  
TURN AROUND  
NOW TO SEE  
WHAT CRAWLS  
OVER THE EDGE  
OF THE CLIFF  
BEHIND YOU...

...YOU STILL WANT  
TO COP OUT?...

3 OF  
THEM...

WHAT HELL-  
WROUGHT KIND  
OF DEPRAVITY IS  
BEHIND THOSE  
THINGS...

...THE TOWN WON'T  
HAVE A CHANCE IN  
HELL OF SURVIVING  
THEM...

I CAN'T  
LET THEM  
JUST DEVOUR  
THE TOWN...

...BUT  
WHAT CAN  
I DO?

...I HAVE TO DO  
SOMETHING...  
I HAVE TO TRY  
AT LEAST...

I MUST TRY...  
HUNDREDS OF  
PEOPLE COULD BE  
KILLED BEFORE  
THE AUTHORITIES  
CAN REACH THIS  
OUT-OF-THE-  
WAY PLACE...

...I WAS  
ONCE HUMAN...

...I KNOW WHAT  
IT'S LIKE TO BE  
HELPLESS... BUT I  
ALSO KNOW HOW  
TO THINK LIKE  
A HUMAN!

...AND IF I CAN'T  
DEFEAT THE THINGS  
BY BRUTE STRENGTH  
I'LL USE MY HUMAN  
BRAINS...

SET YOUR MIND-A-WORKIN' HEAP...YOU CLAIM  
YOU ARE A MAN INSIDE THAT GROTESQUE FORM  
...WE'LL PROVE IT...

THE  
TREES...  
I'LL SET  
THEM ON  
FIRE...

I'LL BURN THE  
LIFE OUT OF THE  
CREATURES...

IT'S NOT  
WORKING...  
THEY'RE  
COMING  
THROUGH...

...IF FIRE  
CAN'T STOP  
THEM, WHAT  
WILL?

THEY'RE  
SPLITTING UP  
INTO SMALLER  
CREATURES.

...MY GOD  
THEY'RE  
MULTIPLYING  
BEFORE MY  
VERY EYES...

...SPLITTING  
UP LIKE BASIC  
ORGANISMS...  
LIKE  
AMOEBAE!



THE BRUSH-  
FIRE AIDED  
BY THE TREES  
IS FANNING THE  
FLAMES...

...ENGULFING  
THE THINGS IN  
A RING... THEY  
CAN'T POSSIBLY  
ESCAPE!



WWWHRAACKKK

THIS  
IS MY  
CHANCE...

...IF I CAN DEFEAT  
THEM NOW...  
WHILE THEY'RE  
SMALL AND NOT  
SO POWERFUL...  
I MAY BE ABLE TO  
WIN THIS OUT-  
MATCHED WAR...

IT'S NOT  
WORKING  
EITHER...

...POINTLESS...THE  
SLIME JUST COLLECTS...  
GATHERS...PULLS  
TOGETHER AGAIN INTO  
AN EVEN **BIGGER**  
MASS...

YOU HAVE MORE THAN **ONE**  
PROBLEM AT THE **MOMENT**  
HEAP...LIKE THE ONE  
CREEPING UP BEHIND YOU...

**YUGGGHHH!!**

...GRABBED ME  
FROM BEHIND...IF  
I DON'T BREAK FREE  
IT MIGHT SMASH  
ME AGAINST  
THE TREES...

...IF I HAVE  
ANY MORE  
TREATMENT  
LIKE I GOT A  
FEW MINUTES  
AGO I'VE  
HAD IT...

...AND SO  
HAS THE  
VILLAGE...

THE PAIN...CAN'T  
ENDURE THE PAIN...

SO STRANGE TO KNOW  
PHYSICAL TORTURE AS  
THE HEAP...

IT'S MOVED  
ON...RIGHT  
OVER ME...  
LIKE IT'S GOT  
NO MIND OF  
IT'S OWN...

...THEY'RE ALL  
FOLLOWING  
THE LEADER...LIKE SHEEP!

THEY'RE ALL FOLLOWING  
THE THING THAT CAME  
OUT OF THE SEA FIRST...

...MUST GET IT AWAY  
FROM THE **TOWN**...IF  
I CAN LURE IT AWAY THE  
OTHERS MIGHT FOLLOW...

LURE? HOW CAN I  
LURE? THERE'S ONLY  
ONE WAY...

...TO  
**DRAG**  
IT...



IT'S  
WORKING...  
THE OTHERS  
ARE  
FOLLOWING...

...BUT THE  
STRENGTH...  
THE WEIGHT...IT'S  
LIKE PULLING AN  
OCEAN LINER...

...EVEN  
THE HEAP  
IS ONLY SO  
STRONG...

PERHAPS...  
FRIEND...BUT  
FOR A MAN  
WHO WAS  
A COWARD  
A FEW  
MINUTES  
AGO YOU'VE  
PROVEN YOU  
HAVE A GOOD  
POWERFUL  
GUT-LOAD  
OF SPIRIT...

WATER  
SUFFOCATING  
...CHOKING  
MY LUNGS...

...I'M RESOLVED  
TO DIE...IN  
SAVING THE  
VILLAGE I'VE  
CUT MY OWN  
THROAT...

THERE  
AIN'T A CHANCE  
I'M GONNA GET OUT  
OF THIS ONE  
ALIVE...ONCE  
THEY SURROUND  
ME I'VE HAD IT...

THEY'RE DISINTEGRATING...  
BREAKING UP INTO MUCK  
COATING THE WATER...TURN-  
ING BACK INTO SLIME...

...AN' I'M  
STILL ALIVE...  
IT'S A  
MIRACLE...

BUT WHAT WERE THEY? IF THERE'S  
ONE PLACE IN THE WORLD SHROUDED  
IN MYSTERY AND THE SUPERNATURAL  
IT'S NEW ENGLAND...BUT THESE  
CREATURES ARE BEYOND ALL  
HUMAN REASON...

...WELL PERHAPS  
NOT SO MUCH...WHEN  
I LOOK AT MYSELF  
I AM UNEXPLAINED...

...WHY SHOULD  
I WORRY ABOUT  
EXPLAINING THEM...

...WHEN I  
CAN'T EVEN  
EXPLAIN  
MYSELF...

BY WAY OF AN INCIDENTAL EPILOGUE...LET US TURN  
FOR A MOMENT TO A SINGLE SCENE ABOUT A MILE  
AWAY...IN THE TINY COASTAL VILLAGE OF PINE BLUFF...

LOCK YOUR DOORS  
...IF THAT BEAST  
EVER GETS NEAR TOWN  
HE'LL MURDER US ALL...  
WE ONLY ESCAPED BE-  
CAUSE WE CAUGHT  
HIM BY SURPRISE...

HE WAS  
HORRIBLE...  
UGLY WITH  
SCARS AND  
MUD COVERING  
HIS BODY...  
HE WAS  
INHUMAN...

SO ENDS OUR HEAD TALE OF THE UNUSUAL...ON RATHER  
A SAD, IRONIC NOTE...DON'T YOU THINK? IT IS  
FORTUNATE INDEED THAT THE "HORRIBLE INHUMAN"  
HEAP OF WHOM THE CHILD TALKS IS NOT PRESENT...  
FOR IF HE WAS...

...HE MIGHT WONDER WHY HE EVEN BOTHERED TO TRY...

MANY YEARS AGO AUTHOR BRAM STOKER WAS FIRST TO WRITE THE CHRONICLES OF THE STRANGE-UNDEAD VAMPIRE DRACULA...AND MORE RECENTLY MANY MOTION PICTURES HAVE BEEN RELEASED DEPICTING STARS BELA LUGOSI AND CHRISTOPHER LEE AS THE BLOOD-FEED WHO STALKED BY NIGHT! THESE TALES WERE CONSIDERED PURE FICTION...NOW IT SEEMS THAT THEY MIGHT NOT BE...IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE THAT THE MADMAN STOKER WROTE OF WAS BASED ON THE LIFE OF A REAL MAN...AND SO STARTS OUR TALE...THE TRUTH BEHIND THE MYTH OF DRACULA!

# THE MYTH OF DRACULA



PREPARE YOURSELF FOR  
A **SHOCK**...FOR THE TALE  
YOU ARE ABOUT TO READ IS  
A DOCUMENT OF **TRUTH**...  
NOW...FOR THE MOST  
INCREDIBLE **TRUE** TALE  
YOU WILL EVER **READ**...

IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT DISCOVERY, HISTORIANS ARE BEGINNING TO THINK THAT **BRAM STOKER** HAD SOMEONE IN MIND WHEN HE CREATED THE FRENCH VAMPIRE **DRACULA**... AND THAT THE BLOOD FIEND WAS NOT SIMPLY A CONFECTION OF HIS IMAGINATION.



**OUR TRUE TALE** STARTS IN 1431 IN THE COUNTRY OF **WALLACHIA**... NOW **ROMANIA**. KING SIGISMUND OF THE SOVEREIGN COUNTRY **HUNGARY** CROWNED A YOUNG MEMBER OF HIS COURT AS RULER OF WALLACHIA... HIS NAME WAS TO BECOME SYNONYMOUS WITH CRUELTY... **VLAD III**



HE LAUNCHED GREAT AFFECTION UPON HIS SON, AND EDUCATED HIM WELL... IN THE WAYS OF HIS **EVIL**!



WITH THE TITLE OF **VOMVODE**, VLAD RETURNED TO HIS HOMETOWN AND NEW KINGDOM TO RULE VICIOUSLY AND MERCLESSLY. HIS PEASANT SUBJECTS WERE GIVEN ENORMOUS TAXES AND TARIFFS WHICH THEIR MEAGER EARNINGS COULD NOT MEET... AND THERE GROWN AMONG THE PEOPLE A GREAT HATRED FOR VLAD... WHOSE ONLY COMPASSION IN THIS WORLD WAS FOR HIS **NEWBORN SON**!



VLAD IV LEARNED HIS LESSONS WELL, AND THERE ARE MANY TALLIES PILED DOWN THROUGH HISTORY OF THE TORTURES HE WOULD PERPETRATE ON INNOCENT PEOPLE!





IN 1455 THE TURKS CONQUERED WALLACHIA AND MURDERED HIS FATHER, KING VLAD III!

THE TURKS IMMEDIATELY SET UP VLAD II AS THEIR PUPPET RULER... BUT HIS FATHER'S TRAINING HAD WORKED WELL AND HE PROVED TO BE AS RUTHLESS AND CRUEL AS HIS FATHER... HAD BEEN! THE PEASANTS SOON NAMED THEIR NEW MASTER DRACULA... MEANING DRAGON OF EVIL!



THE INFAMY SPREAD FAR AND WIDE... IN GERMANY HE BECAME KNOWN AS DRACULE, IN VENICE AS DRAGULAR... AND IN HUNGARY AS DRACULA! HIS ILL DEEDS MADE HIM A WORLD RE-KNOWLEDGE LEGEND OF HORROR IN HIS OWN TIME... AND HE WAS THE SHADY TALK OF SOCIETY THROUGHOUT EVEN THE UNDERWORLD OF PARIS!

IN WALLACHIA... ALL AUTHORITY WAS HELPLESS... BECAUSE HE WAS THE AUTHORITY... AND ALTHOUGH HE COMMITTED HIS BIZARRE ACTS UNDER COVER OF NIGHT AND IN THE PRIVACY OF HIS CASTLE NO MAN WOULD SERVE HIM... HIS PERSONAL "SLAVES" HAD THEIR TONGUES REMOVED SO THAT THEY MIGHT CARRY NO TALK.



HIS PORTRAIT  
HANGS NOW IN THE  
HUNGARIAN NATIONAL  
MUSEUM, AND MANY  
ACCOUNTS OF HIS  
BRUTAL LIFE HAVE  
BEEN PUBLISHED.

ONE SUCH STORY  
IS RELATED BY A  
VILLAGE GRAVEYARD  
KEEPER NEAR THE  
KING'S CASTLE.

HURRY...DIG THE  
GRAVES DEEP AND WELL...  
THEY MUST HOLD THEIR  
CORPSES WELL...LEST THEIR  
SPIRITS ARISE TO  
HAUNT ME!

IT WAS HORRIBLY **IMPALED** AND MUTILATED,  
TEETH MARKS WERE VERY VISIBLE AND THE  
BODY LOOKED **HALF EATEN!**

"ONE NIGHT" SAYS THE  
CRYPTKEEPER, "I BECAME  
VERY CURIOUS AND DUG UP  
ONE OF THE REMAINS OF  
WHAT HAD BEEN HIS VICTIM."



AH, EVERETT... SO GLAD YOU COULD MAKE IT TONIGHT... JUST A FEW FRIENDS GATHERED FOR SOME SPORT!

IT'S SO RARE THAT WE CAN GET TOGETHER THAT I'VE PLANNED SOMETHING SPECIAL LATER ON...



THEIR WAS ANOTHER STORY...NOT SO OFTEN REPEATED AS THE ONE OF THE GRAVE-KEEPER...FOR IT WAS SO HORRIBLE THAT IT WAS BE WHISPERED IN THE ALLEYS AND GUTTERS OF EUROPE... HOWEVER, IT WAS RECORDED BY A WITNESS, A ONE-TIME FRIEND OF VLAD...IT STARTED AS AN INVITATION TO A PARTY...

THE EARLIER PART OF THE EVENING WAS UNEVENTFUL... BUT BEFORE LONG THE STRONG WINE OF VLAD HAD TAKEN ITS COURSE IN OUR VEINS.

VLAD HAD BEEN JITTERY ALL NIGHT... HE PACED THE FLOOR AS IF POSSESSED BY DEMONS... AND WHEN THE DISCUSSION CASUALLY TURNED TO A RECENT UNSOLVED MURDER HE BECAME VERY EXCITED AND INTERRUPTED THE CONVERSATION...



LADIES... I DO HOPE YOU ENJOYED MY WINE... IT'S MY SPECIAL BLEND... GRAPES FROM VINEYARDS OF THE RHINE... AND LOCAL HOME-SPUN BLOOD FROM SOME RECENTLY DEPARTED YOUNG LADIES OF MY COURT... TASTY, DON'T YOU THINK?

NOW COME PLEASE... FOR THE EVENING'S ENTERTAINMENT IS ABOUT TO BEGIN... IN MY "CHAMBERS" BE-NEATH THE CASTLE!

HE LED US DOWN A NARROW WINDING STAIRCASE TO HIS DUNGEON. IT WAS POPULAR IN THOSE DAYS TO HAVE A HORROR CHAMBER. BENEATH ONE'S CASTLE... BUT WE NEVER EXPECTED TO SEE SUCH HORRORS AS THESE...

TONIGHT...WE SHALL HAVE SOME ENJOYMENT...I HAVE HAD MY MEN SCOURING THE COUNTRYSIDE FOR WEEKS IN SEARCH OF A BAND OF GYPSIES FOR OUR LITTLE GAME...



DRACULA FOUND GREAT PLEASURE FROM GIVING US A TOUR OF HIS RACKS...



HIS EYES FLASHED AND GLEAMED AS HE PRODDED HIS VICTIM'S NAKED FLESH...



HIS HOUNDS...STARVED FOR WEEKS FOR THIS OCCASION...RIPPED THE HELPLESS LIMBS FROM THEIR INNOCENT PREY...



I NOTICED THAT THE BLOOD FROM THE VICTIMS WAS CONSERVED IN GIANT VATS WHERE IT DRIPPED...AND OFTEN GUSHED FROM THE NEWLY MANGLED CORPSES...IT HAD BEEN REPORTED TO ME THAT DRACULA OFTEN DRANK THIS...AND I KNEW FOR A PERSONAL FACT THAT HE FREQUENTLY WASHED AND BATHED IN THE WARM BLOOD OF THE FRESHLY SLAUGHTERED PEASANTS!



SUDDENLY DRACULA IS LOST. HIS MAD CRAVINGS BECOME TOO MUCH FOR HIM...HE ATTACKED ONE OF THE YOUNG GIRLS OF OUR OWN GROUP!



VLAD WAS NOTORIOUS FOR BEING A CANNIBAL... BUT NO MAN IN HIS RIGHT MIND DREAMT HIS DELIGHTS EXTENDED TO LIVE FLESH...

I HAVE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING SO GROTESQUE... THE UNFORTUNATE GIRL WAS CHAINED AND WAS SUBJECTED TO THE PERVERTED VLAD'S EVIL AND VILE ACTS!



IN 1402 HE WAS DEPOSED BY THE PRINCE OF VIDIJA AT THE HEAD OF AN ENORMOUS ARMY! IT IS SAID THAT AS THE TROOPS RODE INTO THE SURROUNDING FOREST TO HIS CASTLE THEY WERE GREETED BY SCORES OF HUMAN HEADS IMPALED ON STAKES!



DRACULA DISAPPEARED AND ESCAPED UNTIL 1475 WHEN HE AGAIN SEIZED CONTROL OF HIS THRONE...AND AGAIN THE HORROR THAT WAS ONCE WALLACHIA'S TOOK MORE INNOCENT LIVES!



HUMANITY WAS FORTUNATE...FOR HE LIVED ONLY ANOTHER YEAR AND DIED IN 1477...HIS WRETCHED BODY GAUNT AND RIDDLED WITH DISEASES CAUSED BY THE DEBAUCHERY OF HIS OWN BODY...



...AND SO DIED DRACULA...IN MISERY AND NERVE SHATTERING AGONY...AND IN LONELINESS!

THE  
END



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ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
FIND TOTAL AMT.

MANY HAVE SOUGHT TO CHANGE THE PAST BY  
FLEEING TO THE WAITING ARMS OF SOME FUTURE  
AGE! INDEED, IT IS A GRM CHRONICLE...  
FOOTNOTED BY...

# ...BLIND FATE!!!

BENEATH THE SEARING SUN OF EDONS TO COME,  
A BATTLE FOR LIFE IS FOUGHT...



UPON THIS ALIEN BATTLEFIELD PLEASE ARE VOICED, BUT GO  
UNMARKED, AS AROUND TOYS WITH THE SWIRLING SANDS!  
MYriad QUESTIONS PRESS THE DRAINING MIND...



... ONLY TO SEEK FOR FLEETING  
ANSWERS IN AGES PAST !!!



SCANT HOURS BEFORE... **HOURS** THAT HAVE NOW  
WITNESSED THE PASSAGE OF CENTURIES...



AGAIN!!!  
DAMN THEM,  
DAMN THEM  
ALL!!!

ARE THEY **SOULLES...**  
**BLIND** HIT FOR WHAT  
HELL ON EARTH  
HAVE THEY LAID THE  
FOUNDATION??!

NO LONGER,  
CAN I CLAIM ANY  
KINSHIP TO THESE  
ANIMALS CALLED  
MAN??!

I'LL LEAVE THEM  
TO THEIR  
**MADDOY-RODDED**  
WORLD!!

MINDLESS,  
CANCEROUS  
SLUGS!!!



LONG HAVE I POSTPONED  
THIS DAY OF **DECISION!**  
IF I **FAIL**, I MUST DESCEND  
TO THE **RETID** MUCK OF THIS  
WRETCHED WORLD...

**DESCEND TO THE  
GROTESQUE RITS OF  
INFINITE DEPRESSION!!!**

PRAY GOD,  
I SHALL  
NOT **FAIL!!**



AS THE **ARK...** THE ROSS OF  
**SANITY** IS DOWNED...

IN ANY  
EVENT, I SHALL  
NOT **FAIL** TO **QUIT**  
**THIS**



THE ONCE STILL CELLAR  
AIR IS **TRANSFORMED...**  
RIPPED BY THE **DROWNING**  
**MUSIC OF SECONDS IN**  
**RECTION**, AND **PEALS**  
OF **JOYOUS LAUGHTER**  
BY ONE WHO HAD  
FORSAKEN MIRTH...



HA HA HA  
HA HAHA!!!  
**IT WORKS...**  
**IT WORKS!!!**  
HA HA HA HA  
HAHAHAHA!!!

MAN AND MACHINE, EACH IN THE OTHER'S EMBRACE, ARE THROWN THROUGH TIME! NIGHT AND DAY PASS LIKE THE FLICKERING OF STROBE LIGHTS... A **BLINDING FLASH** ARRIVES, AND PASSES LEAVING WHOM SOMEWHERE IN THE NAMELESS PAST! THE EYES BEGIN TO FOCUS ONCE AGAIN AS THEY ARE PRESENTED WITH THE GRIM **LEGACY** THE FUTURE MUST BEAR...

ANNNNN,  
PURIFICATION BY  
FIRE!! SO THEY  
FINALLY DID IT! THEY  
MUSTERED ENOUGH  
BLINDNESS AND  
STUPIDITY FOR  
ONE FINAL  
ACT!!!



AS MUSE ENDS, REALITY  
PREVALES...

THERE!!!  
HA HA HAAA,  
THEY ARE  
BUILDING  
AGAIN!!!



SECONDS LATER, OR DECADES  
IN THE FUTURE...

LIFE!  
IT  
CONTINUES!!

SOON  
CIVILIZATION  
MUST MAKE  
ANOTHER  
STAGE CALL!!



LIKE THE FAILED  
BIRD, A  
STRUCTURE RISES  
FROM THE DECAY  
OF THE PAST!

WHERE ONCE THE  
DARKNESS OF  
SICK MINDS  
PREVAILED, NOW  
RISES A CITADEL  
OF CRYSTALLINE  
PURITY!!

HOW NOBLE  
THEY MUST  
BE!!

MUST SLOW  
DOWN GRADUALLY,  
GRADUALLY,  
THERE!!



WARS... MURDER,  
RAPE, AND ALL THE  
WORLD DOES, IS  
WATCH!! NO  
ONE HEARS,  
NONE SEEN

PARADOX  
SUPREME. THEY  
WATCH, YET THEY  
ARE BLIND!!

ONLY IN THE  
FUTURE LIES HOPE!!  
ONLY IN...

MUNNN??!



AAAAHHHHHHHHH!!!!



AS THE SLIME-BED SUCKS ITS LATEST  
VICTIM BENEATH THE DARKENED DEPTHS  
OF AWA-SAND DOGS...



1000  
TOO MUCH WEIGHT...  
SINKING FAST...  
MUST AID...



THAT WAS  
CLOSE...  
TOO  
CLOSE!!

IT IS THE  
JUSTICE OF FATE,  
THAT I SHOULD  
LIVE TO SEE  
MY DREAM!!



I'LL SPEAK TO THEM OF  
THE PAST AND REVEL IN  
THE GLORIES POSSESSED  
BY THE FUTURE...

HEH WILL CALL  
ME "SAGE" AND  
FLOCK TO HEAR  
MY WORDS!!



YES, AND IT IS  
WISE WORDS...

...UUUNNNNGGHHH



WHILE SOME WOULD ADDRESS HIM "SAGE", THERE ARE THOSE WHO WOULD BUT LABEL HIM...



"HOST"!!



OH GOD, HELP ME!!  
HELP ME!!  
SOMEONE HELP  
ME... PLEASE!!



NO... NYOOOOO!!  
'MUST KEEP RUNNING'...  
CAN'T STOP!!  
CAN'T STOP!!



ALMOST THERE  
GET UP, GET UP!!  
HURRY!!

AN ANCIENT SCREAM RIPS THROUGH *AMERICAN* BRAIN FIBERS, AND IS GIVEN VOICE BY AN *AGONIZED* MIND! THE BODY HEAVES... DRIED CAPILLARIES CRY... BREATHING IS LABORED, AS IT PASSES THROUGH A COARSE WINDPIPE IN THE GUIDE OF A *GROTESQUE*, HIGH PITCHED *WHEEZE!* THE EYES SLOWLY FOCUS, AND THE SOUNDS OF FOOTSTEPS TREDDING GRANITE BLOCKS, ASSAULTS THE EARS ABOVE THE POUNDING AND THROBBING OF CONSTRICTING VEINS!!



...IN HELL!!!!

ONE DIES, TO GIVE CONSISTENCY TO THE PAST, AND LIVES IN THE PRESENT WITH THE HOPES A GLORIOUS FUTURE!!

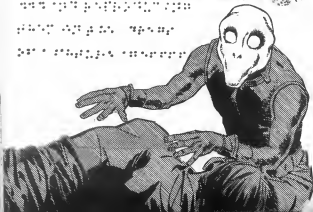


MAN WOULD HOPE TO CONTROL *DESTINY* AND *FATE*, NEVER REALIZING, THAT THESE HOARY SISTERS ARE AS FLEETING AS THE MURMURING WINDS... SCENTED WITH THE JASMINE OF *ANTIQUITY*...

THEY MOCK MORTALS, AND TOY WITH *HOPES*... WHILE MULTIPLYING THE *SAYS* OF THE *PAST*...



.....  
.....  
.....





ACROSS THE  
ROLLING SEAS OF THE  
CARIBBEAN GALES A  
SWASHBUCKLING  
GALLANT OF A BUCCANIER  
--A SWORDSMAN  
ADVENTURER WHO  
USES WITS WITH  
STEEL TO MAKE  
HIMSELF  
MASTER OF THE  
SPANISH MAIN!  
HIS NAME IS NED  
SCULLY, BUT IN HONOR  
OF HIS FIGHTING  
PROWESS AND HIS  
LEGENDARY SUCCESS--  
THE BROTHERHOOD  
OF THE COAST  
RENAMED HIM--

**CAPTAIN SKULL!**



# THE CURSING OF CAPTAIN SKULL

AND NOW--AS  
HE BATTLES FOR  
HIS LIFE AGAINST  
HIS MUTINOUS  
CREW OF CUT-  
THROATS FROM  
TORTUGA WHO  
HAVE TAKEN  
SERVICE WITH  
HIM--HE IS  
ABOUT TO PLUNGE HEAD-  
LONG INTO THAT  
FEARSOME LIFE-  
AND-DEATH  
STRUGGLE  
KNOWN AS...



AVAST, YE  
MUTINOUS  
DOGS!

BACK BEFORE I  
SKEWER YOU ON  
MY STEEL!

IT'S NO USE, CAP'N!  
I SAY WE HIT THE  
TOWN FOR THE  
WOMEN!

YOU SAY WE DON'T--  
SO YOU GO OVERBOARD  
TO FEED THE SHARKS!

HICKMAN

THE BUCCANEER CAPTAIN DRIVES TO THE ATTACK...



CAPTAIN SKULL  
WAR'S ON MEN NOT  
ON WOMEN!

CURSE YE ALL  
YE LILLY-LIVERED  
COWARDS/YE SCUM  
OF THE SEAS!

SINCE YOU'RE THE  
RINGLEADER OF THESE  
APES, I'LL LAY YOU  
OUT FIRST, WOLF!



WHILE I TEACH THESE  
OTHERS THAT WHAT  
THEIR CAPTAIN SAYS--  
THEY DO OR DIE!

A LEAP UPWARD INTO  
THE SHROUDS...

HOTLY PURSUED,  
HE CLAMBERS HIGH  
INTO THE RIGGING...

SO I'LL GET UP HERE  
WHERE YOU CAN ONLY GET  
ME ONE AT A TIME!

ONCE MORE HE  
HURTLES THROUGH  
THE AIR...

IT'S TIME I WAS  
TEACHING YOU  
OBEDIENCE, MY  
LADS, THAT IT IS!



AND NO ONE MAN  
CAN FACE MY STEEL--  
AND LIVE!



BUT NOW IT'S  
TIME TO DO SOME  
ATTACKING ON  
MY OWN!

GUARD YOURSELVES, ME  
HEARTIES! CAPN SKULL  
IS READY TO BEGIN  
FIGHTING IN EARNEST!

DOWNWARD HE DROPS--LIKE A FALLING STAR--BOOTS KICKING OUT TOPPLING MEN FROM THE SHROUDS...

FAITH! IT'S A NEW GAME OF BOWLS I'M AFTER DISCOVERING!

BUT YOU HAVE A LOT FARTHER TO FALL THAN ANY TEN-PIN!

CAT-LIKE HE DROPS TO THE MAIN DECK, FINDING OFF CUTLASS AND DAGGER...

OCH, NOW! NO MATTER HOW MANY OF YOU I DROP THERE'S ALWAYS MORE OF YOU TO COME AT ME!

HE DOES NOT SEE THE BELAYING PIN IN THE HAND OF A MUTINEER...

BUT NEVER MIND! ON CAPTAIN SKULL'S SHIP--CAPTAIN SKULL RULES!

THUD!

OVERBOARD WITH HIM! LET THE SHARKS FINISH HIM OFF!

AYE! HE CAN'T PULL HIS FANCY STUNTS ON THEM!

IN MOMENTS, THEIR CAPTAIN IS FLUNG SENSELESS OVER THE RAIL--TO SERVE AS FOOD FOR THE SHARKS BELOW...

GOOD RIDDANCE TO HIM!

NOW WE CAN RAID THAT SETTLEMENT--AS SOON AS WE CAREEN AND SCRAPE OUR HULL!



**COLD WATER ROUSES THE YOUTHFUL PIRATE CAPTAIN...**

OOOHH! WHAT HAPPENED?

OH, YES...THOSE SCURVY DOGS THREW ME INTO THE SEA--

--AND THERE ARE SHARKS ALL AROUND ME!



THEY WON'T ATTACK UNTIL THEY GET HUNGRY--NOT WITHOUT THE SCENT OF BLOOD!

THANK A KIND PROVIDENCE-- I WASN'T WOUNDED!

EVEN SO--HOW LONG CAN I HOLD THEM OFF?

**THE SUN DIPS INTO THE WEST, AND DUSK FALLS UPON THE SEA...**



IT WON'T BE LONG NOW--THE SHARKS ARE GETTING BOLDER!

IT'S JUST ABOUT THEIR-- FEEDING TIME!

**IN DESPAIR...FACING IMMINENT DEATH AS THE VICTIM OF THE SHARK'S CRUEL, HELL-SPAWNED TEETH... CAPTAIN SKULL NOW QUIVERS AND SHUDDERS WITH SOUL-SHRIEKING FEAR...**



I CURSE YOU ALL, YOU FILTHY SCUM!

MAY A FIENDISH DODM FALL UPON YOU ALL!

MAY THE GHOSTS OF YOUR MANY VICTIMS RISE UP TO DRAG YOU TO A HELLISH DEATH!

**SOMETHING BUMPS HIM IN THE DARK...**



A SHARK!

THEY'RE TIRED OF WAITING AND HAVE COME TO--EAT!

HE WHIRLS TO FIGHT WITH TOOTH AND FIST, BUT--

I'LL NOT BE AN  
EASY MEAL! I'LL-- WHAT'S THIS?

WHY--IT'S A SHATTERED  
MAST OFF SOME SUNKEN  
SHIP!



IN NEAR COLLAPSE, HE FASTENS HANDS  
TO HIS WOODEN FLOAT...

AT LEAST THE  
SHARKS CAN'T GET  
ME ON THIS!

I'LL STAY ALIVE  
A LITTLE WHILE  
LONGER!



ALL NIGHT LONG HE SLEEPS  
AND DREAMS--AND DRIFTS...



IN THE MORNING SUN-  
LIGHT THE CARRIBEAN  
IS WIDE AND EMPTY--  
THIRST BECOMES A  
TORTURE...



I FEEL BAKED--  
BLISTERED! I'D GIVE A CHEST  
OF GOLD DUBLOONS FOR A  
SWIG OF WATER...

THEN--TOWARDS SUNDOWN...



A SAIL!!

BY GOD'S BLOOD!  
A SHIP COME TO  
RESCUE ME--BUT  
WHY DOES SHE  
WALLOW SO!

SHE YAWS AND  
PITCHES TO THE  
WAVES!

AND HER SAILS  
FLAP IDLY!

AS IF THERE'S  
NOBODY ABOARD!



PADDLING THE MAST ACROSS THE SEA, HE REACHES THE SHIP-- CLIMBS THE JACOBS LADDER...



GOD...

A GIRL--TIED TO THE MAST!



AND A VERY FORTUNE  
SCATTERED ON THE  
DECKPLANKS AT  
HER FEET!



WHAT KIND OF MYSTERY  
HAVE I WANDERED INTO?



WHO ARE YOU, LAGG?  
WHAT HAPPENED?

I-- DON'T  
KNOW. I CAN'T  
REMEMBER!

WHY--I CAN'T EVEN  
RECALL MY NAME!



I'LL CALL YOU  
JOANNA! NOW  
SEE IF YOU CAN  
HANDLE THE  
HELM, GIRL.

A SHIP NEEDS  
MORE THAN TWO  
PEOPLE TO SAIL  
HER PROPERLY--  
BUT WE'LL DO  
WHAT WE CAN!

IN THREE DAYS' TIME, FAVORING WINDS CARRY THE LUMBERING MERCHANTMAN TOWARD THE TINY ISLAND OF SAN TOMAS...

I CAN MAKE OUT THE PLACE WHERE I WAS TO CAREEN MY SHIP **STORM RIDER**. IF LUCK FAVORS US, MY MEN WILL BE THERE!

BUT YOUR MEN MAY SEE US-- KILL US BOTH!

NOT SO, GIRL, I HAVE A PLAN IN MIND.



WE'LL ANCHOR ON THE **LEE** SIDE OF THE ISLAND. I HAVE WHAT WE'LL NEED IN THIS **SEA-CHEST!**



CLOTHES FOR YOU, MY PRETTY--AND MAKE-UP FOR US BOTH!

THAT NIGHT, AS THE TROPIC MOON RISES OVER THE PALMETTOS...

I KNOW WHY I'M TO DON THIS FANCY GOWN--

--A SPANISH WOMAN WAS SLAIN ON SAN TOMAS AND HER GHOST IS SAID TO HAUNT ITS SANDS!

BUT WHY DO YOU NEED THE **PHOSPHORUS?**

YOU'LL SOON LEARN, JOANNA!



NOT FAR AWAY, THE BUCCANEERS ARE SWALLOWING JAMAICA RUM AND ROARING SEA CHANTIES, WHEN SUDDENLY...



HAVE YOU COME TO KEEP ME COMPANY?

POOR CLARISSA! POOR CLARISSA! NOBODY VISITS HER SINCE SHE WAS STABBED HERE AND LEFT TO DIE!

WHAT'S YOW?

BESIDE THAT FEMALE APPARITION APPEARS ANOTHER...

LOOK THERE! IT'S THE CAPTAIN!

DEAD AND DROWNED! COME BACK TO HAUNT US!



**PALSIED BY TERROR, THE SEA-ROVERS  
STAND PARALYZED AS...**

**I CURSED YOU,  
SWABS!**

**NOW I'VE COME  
BACK FROM A WATERY  
GRAVE TO SEE YOU  
PUNISHED!**



**I'LL BREAK YOUR  
NECKS AND SEND YOU INTO  
THE FIRES OF HELL!**

**FLINTLOCK PISTOLS ROAR, BUT CAPTAIN  
SKULL SOMERSAULTS LITHELY OUT OF THE  
PATH OF THE BULLETS...**



**YOU SCURRY RATS  
COULDN'T HIT THE  
HULL OF A FORTY-TON  
FRIGATE AT ANCHOR!**



**THEN--THE NIGHT SWALLOWS HIM UP, LEAVING TERRIFIED  
SEAMEN TO BABBLE IN SUPERSTITIOUS FEAR...**

**HE AIN'T HUMAN NO  
MORE! OUR BULLETS WENT  
RIGHT THROUGH HIM!**

**BLAST ME TIMBERS!  
HE'LL DO FOR US  
ALL!**

**HE'LL COME BACK--  
TO FINISH US!**



ONLY THE WOLF—LEADER OF THE  
MUTINEERS—SHOWS ANY COURAGE...

AFTER HIM, YE SWABS!

HIM AND HIS  
ACROBATIC TRICKS!  
THAT'S HOW HE  
ESCAPED YOUR  
BULLETS!

HE'S REAL, I TELL  
YOU—REAL! SO GO  
INTO THEM WOODS  
AN' KILL HIM!

ONE BY ONE THE BUCCANEERS SET OUT  
INTO THE ISLAND FOREST...

NO MATTER WHAT  
WOLF SAYS—THE CAPN  
IS A GHOST!

AND TWO-BY-TWO THEY FALL VICTIM TO CAPTAIN SKULL AND JOANNA...

WHONK!

SWOTTA!

ZONK!

UNTIL ONLY THE WOLF IS LEFT TO STALK  
THE ISLAND SHORES...

HE'S GOT TO BE  
HERE—SOMEPLACE!

WITH HIM GONE I'LL  
HAVE THAT SPANISH  
BEAUTY ALL TO MYSELF!

AROUND A BEND...

FOUL SCUM! COME  
PLAY YOUR BLADE  
WITH MINE!

...AND DIE ON ITS  
POINT FOR THE  
MUTINOUS DOG  
YOU ARE!

STEEL RINGS AS THE WOLF HURLS HIMSELF AT HIS LEADER...

I'LL CHOP YOU INTO GOBBYS!

CLANNNGG!

BAG OF WIND! ALL YOU CAN DO WITH A SWORD... IS TALK ABOUT IT!

A PARRY... A RIPOSTE OF BLUR-FAST BLADES...

CLANNNGGG!

BACK... BACK... BACK GOES THE WOLF FROM THE METALLIC MAGIC OF THE DARTING BLADE THAT CONFRONTS HIM...

YE'VE NEVER FACED SUCH A SWORDSMAN YE MANGY CUR!

IT'S A FINE FENCING LESSON I'M GIVING YOU YOU MAY LAY TO THAT!

A SEAT... A BIND... AND A DEADLY SWORD POINT FLASHES PAST A FALLEN GUARD...

BUT IT'S THE LAST LESSON YOU'LL EVER HAVE!

BECAUSE THIS IS YOUR FINISH!

OVER, THE FALLEN WOLF, CAPTAIN SKULL AND JOANNA STARE AT ONE ANOTHER...

I'VE A CREW TO ROUND UP, JOANNA. THEY'VE LEARNED THEIR LESSON IN MANNERS...

BUT WHAT ABOUT YOU?

I KNOW *NOT* WHO I AM, CAPTAIN SKULL... MY *HERO*... BUT I HAVE A *FEELING* DEEP WITHIN ME THAT WE ARE BOUND TO ROAM THE SEAS... *FOREVER!*

The **END**

NOT EVEN INFERNO CAN HOLD THE DAMNED SOULS OF THE MOST FEARSOME  
PYROMANIC PARTNERS IN HORROR THE WORLD HAS EVER SEEN! THE NIGHT ITSELF  
SHRINKS BEFORE THEIR CONSUMING BREATH! HELPLESS HUMANS MELT INTO ASHES  
IN THEIR BLAZING EMBRACE! NO WEAPON CAN RESIST THEIR BEARING STRENGTH!  
THE EARTH AND ALL IN IT WILL NOT SLEEP EASY NIGHTS FROM NOW ON! FOR  
THE FIREBRANDS HAVE ESCAPED...



# THE FURNACE OF HELL

Take a frantic fantasy-trip into KANIGHER and AMADOR-land!

TWO GUSTENING LINE PALE FISH EMERGING FROM THE BLACK WATERS OF BUZZARD'S CAPE, TWO SWIMMERS CLIMB THE STEEP BLUFF CONFRONTING THEM LIKE A FORBIDDEN WALL...



STILL WANT TO GO THROUGH WITH IT, CELIA?

YOU CAN'T SHAKE ME, NORM!

AHEAD LOOMS A SINISTER PILE OF STONE EXHUDING AN AURA OF DREAD...

THERE'S THE HOUSE! BLACK AND SILENT AS A TOMB!

YOU CAN'T FRIGHTEN ME! ANYMORE THAN THE SUPERSTITIOUS TALES OF FEARFUL VILLAGERS!

I--I DON'T BELIEVE IT! OUR IMAGINATION IS PLAYING TRICKS ON US! TH-THERE'S NO SUCH THING!

CELIA--LOOK!

CELIA! THE SALTY TANG OF SEA AIR HAS VANISHED? SOMETHING HAS TAKEN ITS PLACE!

I SMELL IT TOO, NORM! SOMETHING--EVIL!





THE FIERY EMBRACE OF THE BLAZING APPARITIONS...



THEY'RE BREATH IS SCORCHING!



NOW—THOU WILL PAY THE SUPREME PENALTY FOR TRES-PASSING!



MY SKIN-- BURNING OFF!...

AS THE HAPLESS COUPLE IS ENVELOPED BY THE  
FLAMING FIGURES IN A SEARING EMBRACE...

WE DON'T  
MEAN TO  
TRESPASS—  
LET US  
GO!

H-HAVE  
MERCY—PLEASE!  
WE'RE ONLY  
HUMAN!

NO  
MERCY WAS  
SHOWN US!

AYE!  
NO MERCY!  
NO MERCY AT  
ALL!

LIKE FIERY HUMAN TORCHES  
PLUNGING THROUGH SPACE HEAD-  
LONG TOWARDS THE DARK WATERS...

THE SEA HISSES WITH STEAM FROM THE DEMONIC  
HEAT AS THE FIERY FIGURES SCORCH A VOLCANIC  
PATH THROUGH THE FROTHING WATERS...

NOT EVEN THE COLD WATERS OF THE  
AFRIGHTED SEA CAN EXTINGUISH THE  
UNBURNABLE FIREBRANDS!

HAVE  
PITY!  
Y-YOU'RE  
BURNING US  
UP ALIVE!

IS THERE NO  
PITY IN YOUR  
SOULS?

NONE! WE  
HAVE NO SOULS,  
TWO CRIES  
FALL ON  
DEAF  
EARS!

MY  
HEART'S  
TURNING TO  
BURNT  
EMBERS!

AIE—  
JUST AS WE  
WERE CON-  
DEMNED TO  
LIVING  
HELL!

WE  
WILL NEVER  
LET THEM  
GO!

AYE!  
VENGEANCE  
WILL BE  
OURS!

AHHHHHHH

NONE WHO  
ARE HAPLESS  
ENOUGH TO SEE US  
AS WE REALLY ARE  
WILL LIVE TO REVEAL  
OUR DREAD  
SECRET!

THIS MAID  
IS TOO COMELY  
BEFORE SHE  
ATTRACTS EDWIN'S  
INCONSTANT HEART  
SHE WILL BE  
LOATHSOME  
CHARRED FLESH  
AND BLACKENED  
BONES!

AS  
LONG AS  
HEAVEN  
WILL *NOT*  
ADMIT  
*US*...

NOR  
HELL...  
*ITSELF*...

WE WILL  
TURN THE  
WORLD INTO A  
NOLOCAUST!

AND ALL  
WHO DWELL  
IN IT... INTO  
ASHES!

WE WILL  
MAKE THEM  
PAY! AS WE  
HAVE  
PAID!

AYE! THE CENTURIES ARE ON  
OUR SIDE! OUR FLAMES BURN  
BRIGHT! FED BY UNQUENCH-  
ABLE VENGEANCE! FOR WHAT  
THE RACE OF MAN HAS DONE TO  
*US*... WE WILL DO TO THEM!

DAWN  
APPROACHES!  
MURRY! WE  
MUST RETURN!

BUT WE WILL  
EMERGE  
AGAIN! AND  
AGAIN! AND  
AGAIN!

DAWN... ON THE BROODING BOSOM OF THE SINISTER SEA, AS  
FISHERMEN RAISE THEIR NETS...

HURL THEM BACK!  
THEY'RE CURSED!  
THEIR FATE WILL  
BE VISITED ON  
*US*!

NO... WE CANNOT!  
THEY WERE *ADAMAN*...  
ONCE! WE MUST BRING  
THEM BACK TO SHORE  
TO BE BURIED! OR OUR  
SLEEP WILL BE  
HAUNTED BY THEM  
FOREVER!

MY GOD!  
LOOK! A SIGHT  
TOO HORRIBLE  
FOR ANY HUMAN  
EYE TO BEHOLD!

LATER, AS THE FEARFUL FISHERMEN RETURN WITH THEIR CHARRED CATCH...

THIS AIN'T A SIGHT FOR A WOMAN! 'TIS THE WORK OF THE DEVIL!

WHO BUT THE DEVIL COULD CAUSE SWIMMERS TO BURN IN THE COLD SEA?

RUN FROM THE HORRIBLE SIGHT, MISS!

NO! THE DEVIL DOESN'T EXIST! EXCEPT IN THE HEARTS OF MEN!

NOT TOO LONG AGO, IN THIS VERY SEA, MEN BURNED THEIR BROTHERS, ACCUSING MEN AND WOMEN OF BEING WITCHES AND HALLUCS! THAT WAS THE DEVIL'S WORK! I'M HERE TO WRITE ABOUT THOSE POOR LOST SOULS! INNOCENT OF WRONG-DOING!

SUPERSTITION BREEDS FEAR! ONLY THE TRUTH CAN SET US FREE! I AM GOING TO SEEK TRUTH BEHIND THIS HORROR! I WON'T REST TILL I FIND IT! I HAVE A SPECIAL REASON!

AT THE VILLAGE RAMSHACKLE BOOKSTORE... A LIVELY VISITOR...

THERE'S AN OLD BOOK ON THE BURNING OF WITCHES IN SALEM AND HEREABOUTS! WRITTEN ON THE SPOT BY AN EYE-WITNESS! WITH LIFE-LIKE DRAWINGS OF THE CONDEMNED! CALLED BURN WITCH -- BURN! YOU'RE WELCOME TO LOOK FOR IT!

THANK YOU!

BUT--AFTER POURING THROUGH THE MOUNTAINOUS PILE OF DUSTY BOOKS...

MY EYES ARE BURNING FROM LOOKING THROUGH THESE DUSTY BOOKS! I'LL COME BACK LATER AND CONTINUE MY SEARCH! BUT--IT LOOKS HOPELESS!



AS THE GRAVEYARD MIST ROLLS ACROSS THE VILLAGE THE TROUBLED MAID LEAVES...



MAKING HER WAY ALONE PAST CRUMBLING TOMBSTONES...



ATTRACTED TOWARD A LONELY SPOT OVER WHICH THE WIND WAILS LIKE A WEeping WOMAN...



SURROUNDED BY THE DARK FOG LIKE A GOTTING BURIAL SHROUD...



SUDDENLY--THE BALEFUL FOG PARTS BEFORE THE STARTLED GIRL...





PLEASE  
DON'T RUN! I  
DIDN'T MEAN TO  
STARTLE  
YOU!

I'VE GOWN BRAND-  
I LIVE IN THAT BIG  
OLD HOUSE ON  
THE BLUFF!

I-I'M A  
STUDENT OF  
THE OCCULT...  
WITCHCRAFT...  
DEMONOLOGY.

WHAT'S A  
BEAUTIFUL  
GIRL LIKE YOU  
DOING OUT  
HERE  
ALONE?

SUDDENLY-- WITH BLOOD-STAINED TEETH... SATAN'S  
OWN FURIE CREATURE FLUTTERS AT THE  
TERRIFIED GIRL...



UGH--  
A BAT!  
PLEASE--

PLEASE  
DRIVE IT  
AWAY FROM  
MY HAIR!



DON'T  
WORRY, I  
WON'T LET  
ANY HARM  
COME TO  
YOU!



I'VE HEARD  
THAT FOLK TALE  
TOO! THERE'S ONLY  
ONE WAY TO FIND  
OUT! OPEN THE  
GRAVE AND  
EXHUME THE  
BODIES! BUT--  
WHO'LL  
DARE DO IT?

I'M DOING  
RESEARCH ON  
THE SALEM WITCH  
TRIALS AND BURNINGS!  
ONE OF THE PAPERS  
I READ MENTIONED  
THAT TWO VICTIMS  
WERE BURIED IN  
THIS VICINITY?  
PERHAPS IN THIS  
GRAVE?



THERE! IT'S  
FLYING AWAY!  
YOU'RE ALL  
RIGHT NOW!

OOOOOH--  
IT SENT THE  
CHILLS RIGHT  
THROUGH ME!



HOW CAN I  
THANK YOU?

LIKE  
THIS?



I COULDN'T  
RESIST-- YOU'RE  
SO PRETTY!  
FORGIVE ME?

OF,  
COURSE...



MY LIBRARY IS FILLED WITH OLD VOLUMES ABOUT THE WYTON TRIALS IN THE VICINITY! PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE TO LOOK THROUGH THEM! AND THEN STAY FOR DINNER! MY HOUSEKEEPER, RITA BANE, IS AN EXCELLENT COOK!

RITA BANE? THAT'S ODD! MY NAME IS **BARRIE BANE**—I WONDER IF WE'RE RELATED! I'LL ASK HER.



INSIDE THE HOUSE ON THE HILL...

I HOPE YOU'RE HOUSE-KEEPER **WON'T** MIND?

OF COURSE NOT, SHE LOVES MY COMPANY! IT'S **LOVELY** OUT HERE!

...HODDED EYES STARE **SALEFULLY** AT THE APPROACHING COUPLE...



RITA...MISS BANE IS STAYING FOR DINNER AFTER SHE USES THE LIBRARY!

MR. BRAND TOLD ME YOUR NAME IS **BANE TOO!** PERHAPS WE'RE RELATED! THROUGH SOME ANCESTOR?

I'D BETTER START DINNER!



I—I WONDER WHY YOUR HOUSEKEEPER **DIDN'T** ANSWER ME?

DON'T MIND RITA—BARRIE—SHE'S A LITTLE **ECCENTRIC!** BUT SHE IS A MARVELOUS COOK! YOU'LL SEE! NOW HELP YOURSELF TO THE BOOKS HERE!

FROM AN ADJACENT ROOM—VOLCANIC FIRES SEETH INSIDE THE VICIDIAL HOUSEKEEPER, AS...



I HOPE YOU FIND WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR— I KNOW I HAVE!

TAKE YOUR TIME! I'LL SEE YOU LATER! I WANT TO SPEAK TO RITA.

THANK YOU.



NOTHING HERE I **HAVEN'T** SEEN BEFORE!

OWH— I'VE **KNOCKED** THIS PAINTING **ASKEN!** I'LL STRAIGHTEN IT BEFORE RITA SEES IT! SHE'S SURE TO THINK I'M CARELESS!

BARBIE IS STARTLED AT THE SUDDEN UNCOVERING OF...

INSTANTLY ENTHRALLED BY THE ELUSIVE TONE...

WHY--THERE'S  
AN OLD BOOK  
HIDDEN IN A  
SECRET  
COMPART-  
MENT  
BEHIND  
THE  
PAINTING!

IT'S--**BURN  
WITCH--  
BURN!**

EDWIN  
BRAND  
PROBABLY  
DOESN'T  
EVEN KNOW  
IT'S HERE!

I'LL TELL  
HIM ABOUT IT  
AFTER I  
LOOK AT  
IT!

THE VILLAGE  
BOOKSELLER WAS  
RIGHT! THE EYE-WITNESS  
DRAWINGS ARE SO LIFE-  
LIKE-- I FEEL AS IF I WERE  
ACTUALLY THERE-- WHEN  
THE WITCH BURNINGS TOOK  
PLACE NEAR SALEM, AT  
BUZZARD'S CONVE!

THE ABSORBED READER IS HYPNOTICALLY  
DRAWN TO THE SKETCHES OF THE PAST...

BARBIE FINDS HERSELF RE-LIVING  
THE AWFUL HAPPENINGS... AS IF SHE  
TOO WERE AN EYE-WITNESS TO THE  
PAINFUL SACRIFICE TO COME...



"WARLOCK AND WITCH BURN FOR CASTING  
EVIL SPELLS!"



WARLOCK!  
THOU WILT NO  
LONGER BENEFIT  
THE INNOCENTS!  
YOU AND YOUR  
EVIL ALLY--  
THE WITCH  
BURNING YOU!



HELL  
WILL  
NOT  
HOLD  
US!

EDWIN  
BRAND! RITA  
BANE! BURN!  
WITCHES! BURN!  
MAY YOUR SOULS  
ROT IN  
HELL!

WE  
WILL  
REDEEM  
FROM  
THE FIRE  
TO  
AVENGE  
OURSELVES

AH! WE WILL  
RISE FROM OUR  
OWN ASHES TO  
CONSUME THEE  
ALL!

AND A BEARING THOUGHT GLAZES THROUGH THE READER'S HEART—



EDWIN BRAND  
--RITA BANE!-- THE  
SAME NAMES AND PRICES  
OF THE TWO WHO LIVE IN  
THIS HOUSE! AND I'M  
ALONE WITH  
THEM!



IN NAMELESS TERROR, BARRIE FLEES...

IT-IT'S  
SO DARK!  
IN THE FOG  
IS S-SO  
COLD!

I'VE GOT TO  
GET BACK TO  
THE VILLAGE BEFORE  
THEY REALIZE  
I'M GONE!

SUPPENSE... THE GLOOMY DARKNESS GLOWS  
WITH INFERNAL FIRES...



WH-WHAT'S  
THAT STRANGE  
GLOWY G-GLIMMER  
FROM THAT  
GRAVE?

BEFORE THE HORRIFIED FUGITIVE CAN WILDLY  
TURN AWAY-SHE IS CAUGHT IN A SEARING  
EMBRACE!

THE SCREAMING GIRL IS CONSUMED LIKE A  
FRAGILE MOTH DROPPING BY A TONGUE OF FIRE!

RITA! WHAT *MUST*  
THAT *DOSE*? IS THERE  
NO END TO THY  
JEALOUSY? WHICH  
CONSUMES THEE  
HOTTER THAN ANY  
FLAME - EVEN  
NOW!

NO EDWIN! THAT  
IS MY CURSE! MY  
THINE IS TO BE  
JOINED TO ME  
FOREVER! TO  
LIVE BY DAY AND  
THE INNOCENTS!  
UNDETECTED! IN  
TO ADORN THE NIGHT  
AFIRE!

RITA BANE?  
THE NYXER WHO  
WAS BURNED AT  
THE STAKE? NO-  
NOT YOU--

AYE! IT IS I!  
COME TO CHANGE  
THY PRETTY  
FACE!

IN  
BLACKEST  
NIGHT  
FOREVER  
MORE

MY FLAME  
BURNS  
BRIGHT--

I  
AM  
HELL'S  
FIRE--  
BRAND!



THOU WILT  
NOT STOP ME  
FROM SEEKING MY  
PLEASURE WITH A  
PRETTY WRENCH.  
RITA! GO THINE  
OWN WAY!

THE FLAMES HAVE JOINED US  
EDWIN! WE CANNOT BE SEPARATED!  
OUR WAY IS ONE! TO RISE FROM OUR  
SMOLDERING ASHES AND SEEK  
VENGEANCE ON ALL WHO FALL  
INTO OUR HANDS!

\*THUS THE MOST SCORCHING COUPLE TO ESCAPE  
FROM THE FURNACE OF HELL - TO SET UNWARY  
HUMANS ABLAZE! - **THE FIREBRANDS!**  
THE END ... FOR THE MOMENT!

THE  
END

IT RAINS OUTSIDE THE WINCHESTER MEMORIAL HOSPITAL... RAINS IN A TORRENTIAL DOWNPOUR THAT THREATENS TO DROWN THE SMALL SEA-PORT VILLAGE OFF THE COAST OF CAPE COD -- FRANK GOETHE CARES NOT ABOUT THIS RAIN... HE HAS OTHER, MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONCERN HIMSELF WITH AT THE MOMENT... LIKE A PREGNANT WIFE ABOUT TO GIVE BIRTH AT ANY SECOND...

...AND SO STARTS OUR TALE...

...WITH A PREMATURE LOOK AT THE BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT IN THE NEXT DAY'S LOCAL NEWSPAPER... WHICH READS!

— from THE WINCHESTER DAILY CITIZEN

GORTSE — Frank and Vanessa are pleased to announce the births of seven sons, Edgar, Harold, Joseph, Peter, Steven, Greta and Ramona, 4 pounds in total, on February 25, 1972, at the Winchester Memorial Hospital. All well, and our first-born.

# BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT





I CAN JUST SIT HERE FOR HOURS GETTING DRUNKER AND DRUNKER...

...WHAT'S THE POINT? IF I CAN'T BE OF USE AT THE HOSPITAL, I MAY AS WELL JUST STARE AND DRINK!



NO... THAT'S NOT RIGHT... WHICH VANESSA IS READY TO DELIVER SHE'LL NEED ME WITH HER...

...WHAT GOOD WILL I BE TO HER IF I'M IN A DRUNKEN STUPOR!

I'LL WALK...

...SO IT'S A BAD NIGHT-- NOT TO ME IT ISN'T-- TO ME THE RAIN IS SYMBOLIC...



CLEANSING THE WORLD FOR THE ARRIVAL OF MY FIRST BORN--

...I WONDER HOW VANESSA'S DOING-- IS SHE IN PAIN? IS THE DELIVERY GIVING HER ANY TROUBLE?



I PRAY TO GOD IT ISN'T... WE'D LIKE A LOT OF CHILDREN... IF THIS BIRTH GOES WELL THERE WILL BE OTHERS!

...OTHER WANT NIGHTS WHEN I CAN JUST LET MY MIND WANDER AND DREAM OF THE FUTURE!



AND REMEMBER THE PAST... HOW WE MET... JUST A FEW MILES FROM HERE...

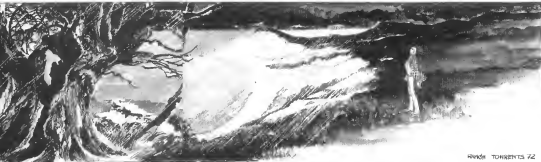
...I, THE SAILOR, ON SHORE-LEAVE FOR A FEW HOURS IN MAKECASH HARBOR...

SHE, THE BEAUTIFUL, SHY GIRL I FOUND AS I CHOSE TO SPEND MY TIME WALKING...

I'LL NEVER FORGET HER FACE THAT FIRST DAY... ALMOST FRIGHTENED AS I CAME UPON HER SWIMMING... IN THE MIDDLE...

...RAH RAH... I'LL NEVER FORGET... NEVER...

...AND FROM THAT DAY ON... THANK GOD... SHE WAS MINE... MY WOMAN...



BETTER BE GETTING BACK... IT'S BEEN HOURS...

...DR. SIBBY-WHITE MUST BE WONDERING WHERE I GOT TO!



DOCTOR I...

JUST IN TIME FRANK... CONGRATULATIONS...

YOU'RE NOW A PROUD FATHER... COME AND SEE THE LITTLE ONE'S AND YOUR WIFE...

THEY'RE WAITING FOR YOU IN THE RECOVERY ROOM...



HELLO LOVE... EVERYTHING ALRIGHT?

YES FRANK DEAR... EVERYTHING WENT WELL... DID YOU SEE YOUR YOUNG ONE'S YET?

NO WHERE?...

WHERE THEY ARE!



IN A BASKET?

...IT'S NOT JUST A BASKET... IT'S A SPECIAL INCUBATOR... KEEPS THEM WARM UNTIL THEY CAN GET HOME...

...YOUR WIFE IS READY TO GO HOME ALREADY-- IN A COUPLE OF MINUTES SHE'LL BE DRESSED.

RANKIN TORRENTS 72



THANK YOU  
DOCTOR... WE  
APPRECIATE ALL  
YOU'VE DONE...

...NOT AT ALL, MY BOY... IT'S BEEN MY PLEASURE-- MY DISTINCT  
HONOR AND PRIVILEGE TO HAVE MADE THIS DELIVERY...

...I HOPE ALL GOES WELL AT HOME-- IF  
THERE IS ANYTHING FURTHER I CAN DO  
I'LL BE ONLY TOO HAPPY... AND REST  
ASSURED THAT THE HOSPITAL  
STAFF WON'T TELL A SOUL...

HOW DO YOU  
FEEL, WANDERER?

JUST FINE  
DOCTOR...  
...FINE AND  
PROUD!



RAMON TORRES/72

NOW COMES THE DAWN... THE RAIN THAT HAS FALLEN DURING THE NIGHT  
LEAVES PUDDLES ABOUT THE GROUND AS FRANK CARRIES HIS WIFE-  
WOMAN TO THE CAR -- IT HAS BEEN A LONG NIGHT...

...IT WILL BE A FEW DAYS NOW BEFORE THE EGGS HATCH AND HIS  
CHILDREN KNOW AIR AND LIGHT... BUT IT WILL BE DAYS FILLED WITH  
HAPPINESS FOR FRANK AND WANDERER... DAYS SHARED AND  
REMEMBERED... FOR THERE WILL BE A NEXT TIME TOO...



ANNUAL • ANNUAL • ANNUAL • ANNUAL • ANNUAL • ANNUAL

READY FOR NIGHTMARE'S FIRST ANNUAL SHOCKER-BARREL BUCKET OF BRAIN BENDERS?  
YOU'D BETTER BE... BECAUSE IT'S ON ITS WAY TO YOU JULY 27/72  
BEARING THESE TOKENS OF TERRIFYING IMAGERY...

'THE DAY THE  
EARTH WILL DIE'...

Plunges you into no-  
fiend's land in a sus-  
pense-jammed tale of  
for-ever-fear!

'LIMB FROM LIMB  
FROM DEATH'...

Maybe you thought the  
great train robbery was  
something... hold onto  
your retreating sanity  
when you read of the  
man who stole a couple  
of human limbs!

PLUS —

Freak-out on the drug-  
culture inspired:

'AND IF A FIEND  
SHOULD COME  
A' CALLIN'...!

AND —

A classic adaptation of  
Stevenson's

'DR. JEKYLL &  
MR. HYDE'.

ALL THIS AND MUCH  
MORE... IN THE  
FIRST...



# NIGHTMARE ANNUAL



PABLO  
MARLOS